2024/25

IMPACT REPORT

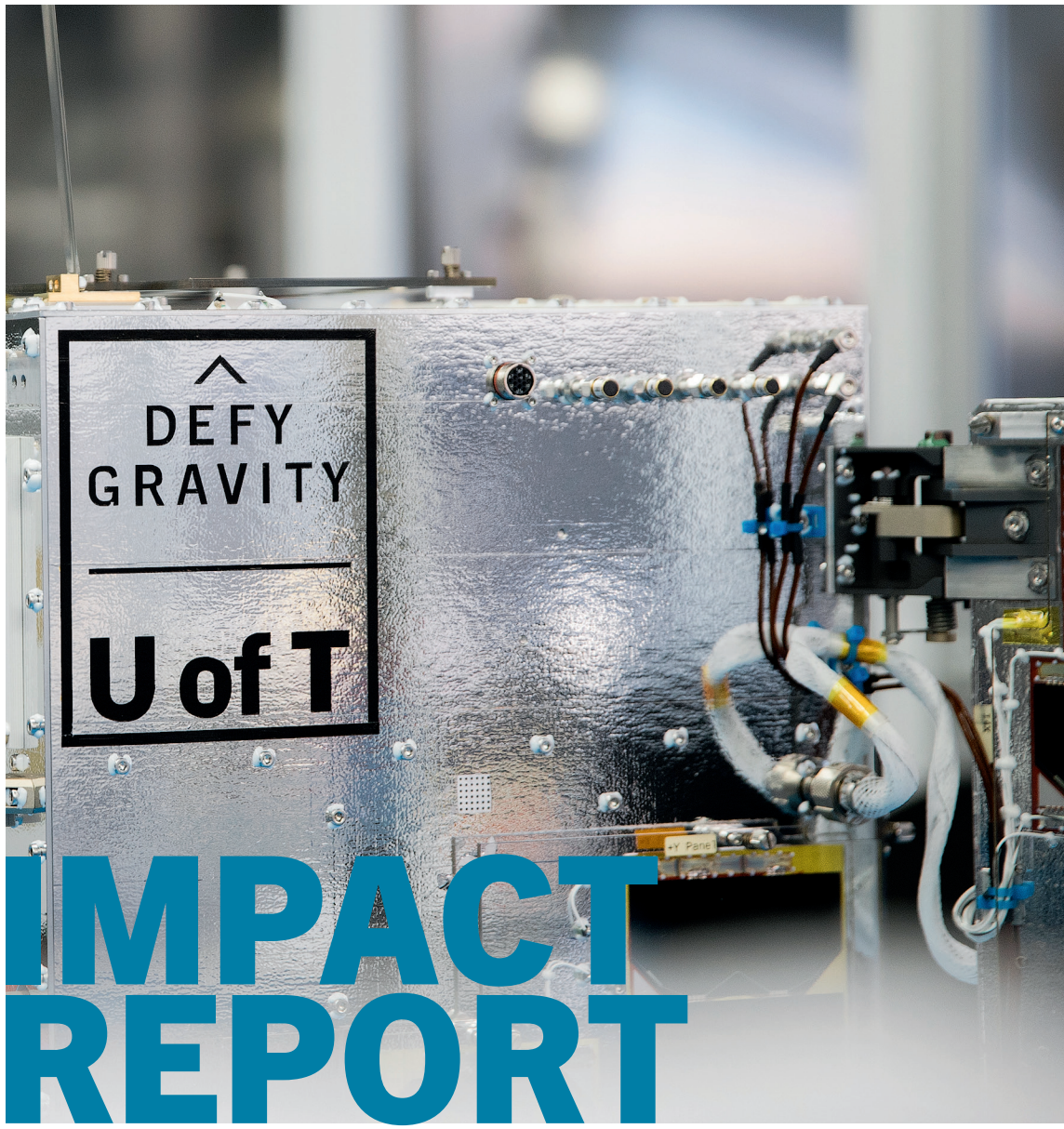

Photo by Matthew Volpe

This year's report provides a snapshot of the University of Toronto Libraries' system-wide impact, highlighting key data and updates. With the support of our partners, UTL continues to advance research, teaching, and learning across the university.

Challenge accepted: Preparing our libraries for the future

As the university transforms to meet new opportunities and challenges, U of T Libraries continues to lead with vision and through partnership across our community. From innovative programs that support student balance and well-being to investments in sustainable infrastructure and cutting-edge research, this year's report highlights how our libraries are shaping the future of learning and scholarship — fostering a culture of research and discovery, and working with faculty to bring new ideas and technologies to life.

We are proud of programs that support student well-being and academic success. Initiatives such as *Pick Up and Play*, providing access to sports equipment on front campus, therapy dogs in our spaces, and collaborations with Student Life like *Night Against Procrastination* help students find motivation, manage their workload, de-stress, and connect with peers as they prepare for academic challenges.

Our spaces are transforming to meet the evolving needs of our community. The Music Library was recently refreshed, and renovation work is underway on the Map & Data Library to create more welcoming, student-centred learning environments. At the Downsview facility, an ambitious expansion is paired with deep sustainability commitments. In partnership with U of T's Sustainability Office, extensive decarbonization measures are being implemented, positioning UTL at Downsview to become the university's first climate-positive facility.

Our research and innovation activities continue to inspire, powered by the generosity of donors. The Old Books, New Science Lab is uncovering hidden stories in rare texts and sharing expertise with libraries worldwide. UTL also played a leading role as a founding member of the university's AI Task Force, helping to shape a vision for how artificial intelligence can support teaching, learning, and research in alignment with our values.

As we enter a new digital era, we're also contending with new challenges, including a rising tide of disinformation. In times like these, UTL's services are more vital than ever, and we're rising to the occasion, providing trusted guidance and teaching information literacy to help our users navigate this rapidly changing landscape.

At the heart of every success story is our community of supporters. This year, libraries participated in U of T Giving Day, with David Fernández, Head of the Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, serving as a returning ambassador. As David reminds us, "Libraries aren't just where books reside. They're where communities are built."

Community is at the heart of our mission — and with your continued support, we will advance research, support students, and create inclusive spaces that enrich the life of the university for generations to come.

Larry P. Alford
University Chief Librarian
University of Toronto Libraries

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO LIBRARIES

DEFY GRAVITY

UTL by the numbers:
Impact on our community

#1
research library system in Canada

Top 3
in North America (Association of Research Libraries)

4 million
books housed and managed at our Downsview facility

16.7 million
electronic and print volumes in 341 languages

61,000+
reference questions answered across all libraries this year (61,382)

100,000 hours
spent online — equal to 11 years of students, researchers & faculty exploring our website

13.5 million+
journal article downloads from UTL's eresource collections this year

3.7 million
electronic books available anytime, anywhere

Supporting
100K students
across the tri-campus system

& 16.5K faculty

2.4 million
unique users visit the U of T Libraries website each year

11.4 million
annual searches in the library catalogue

637 donors
making the future of learning and discovery possible

U of T ranks
top 50
globally in 46 subjects — more than any university in the world

U of T is
3rd in the world
for research citations — after Harvard and University of Chinese Academy of Sciences

Now in its ninth year, the Wilson Prize recognizes six outstanding undergraduate researchers annually, with winners selected from across all three campuses. Each receives a $1,000 award in recognition of their exceptional work and commitment to research excellence.

Research in action

How the Wilson Prize highlights UTL's role in student success

Each year, the Patricia and Peter Shannon Wilson Undergraduate Research Prize recognizes exceptional undergraduates who demonstrate curiosity, critical thinking, and a mastery of research skills—developed through the resources, collections, and expertise of U of T Libraries.

Behind every winning project is a journey of discovery that begins in the stacks, databases, and archives. Along the way, students learn to navigate complex information landscapes, evaluate sources with confidence, and transform their questions into original research that deepens understanding of real-world issues. Through workshops, one-on-one consultations, and access to specialized collections, UTL librarians help students turn their ideas into original research that stands out among their peers.

"This project opened my eyes to the world of U of T's library resources, which provide truly astounding amounts of information on every subject under the sun," says winner Sasha Adamova from the Faculty of Arts & Science. "It is incredibly validating as a first-year student to have my ideas recognized, and it encourages me to continue developing my research and critical thinking through the rest of my undergraduate journey."

For winner William Kilbride, the recognition was particularly meaningful as a student casual employee at UTL. "My undergraduate experience has been indelibly marked by the access that it has provided me to collections and services that are unparalleled in Canada (and among the greatest in the world)," he says. "I find it incredibly fulfilling, inspiring, and heartening to have

received this recognition as a seeker and producer of information from the contest's board of reviewers."

Winner Bavan Pushpalingam's project began as an investigation into food insecurity and became a deeper inquiry into the politics of visibility, belonging and justice for a marginalized Tamil community in Sri Lanka. "Receiving the Patricia and Peter Shannon Wilson Undergraduate Research Prize is an honour and a responsibility," says Bavan Pushpalingam. "It affirms that research grounded in care, relationship and accountability belongs within academic spaces."

Since its founding, the Wilson Prize has helped launch students toward remarkable achievements. Notably, 2022 recipient Sapolnach Prompiengchai went on to receive a Rhodes Scholarship to Oxford University in 2023, exemplifying how the research, mentorship, and scholarly curiosity nurtured through U of T Libraries can open doors to global opportunity.

The prize is made possible through the generosity of Peter and Patricia Shannon Wilson, whose endowment honours Patricia's deep belief in education and her enduring connection to the University of Toronto and its libraries. As her son Peter explains, "My mother has always valued the importance of education and the opportunities it provides to broaden minds… She believes this award enables a new generation to hone their research skills and provide a path for their future success." This kind of learning begins in the library and lasts a lifetime.

With the Wilsons' support, and the mentorship of UTL librarians, students have developed the confidence, research acumen, and intellectual curiosity that will guide them through graduate studies, professional pursuits, and lifelong learning. Every great research journey begins with a question—and often, a librarian.

By Larysa Woloszansky

Photo by Hanna Borodina

The 2025 Patricia and Peter Shannon Wilson Undergraduate Research Prize winners, from left: Sasha Adamova, Vivian Zhi, Kimberley Ng, William Kilbride. Not pictured: Bavan Pushpalingam and Constantine Matthaios. The winners are posing with University Chief Librarian Larry Alford and Vice-President and Provost Trevor Young.

Teaching in 3D

Faculty collaboration with UTL

U of T Libraries has always maintained close relationships with faculty, supporting teaching, research, and scholarship across every discipline. Today, those partnerships are evolving in exciting new ways. Entrepreneurship Librarian Carey Toane exemplifies this kind of forward-thinking collaboration. By combining subject expertise with emerging technologies, Carey and colleagues help faculty design hands-on experiences that bridge theory and practice in powerful new ways.

For example, Dr. Judi Laprade, Associate Professor, Teaching Stream, in the Division of Anatomy at the Temerty Faculty of Medicine, worked with Carey and staff at the Gerstein Science and Information Centre and the MADLab 3D printing service to create a modular brain model. The printed model consists of separate horizontal, coronal, and sagittal sections that students can assemble, disassemble, and explore with pipe cleaners to visualize internal structures in three dimensions. "It's impossible for me to bring bones or specimens into the lecture theatre, and it's important to have hands-on models in lab as well that students can explore to support their understanding and reinforce what they've learned," Dr. Laprade explains. "I would not have access to a 3D printer otherwise, nor do I have the time or expertise to learn about the technology myself, so having the support and expertise of the Gerstein + MADLab 3D printing service has been essential."

Photo by Carey Toane

Similarly, in the Faculty of Dentistry, Dr. Trevor Thang partnered with Carey and the Gerstein 3D printing team to develop multi-material jaw models with realistic radiographic properties. "Working with the Gerstein 3D printing service has been invaluable as I develop a pipeline for creating radiographic anatomy phantoms," says Dr. Thang. "Having access to the technology and the guidance of an experienced team has helped me navigate the learning curve and set a strong foundation for advancing this teaching tool."

As technology evolves, UTL staff will continue to expand their impact—helping faculty create engaging, practical, and innovative learning experiences for the next generation.

By Larysa Woloszansky

Above: Dr. Judi Laprade with a model of a brain.

Our Donors

With your generosity, UTL strengthens the foundation of learning, discovery, and innovation at the University of Toronto. We gratefully acknowledge the individuals and organizations whose contributions of $500 or more have made a lasting difference. **Thank you.**

CASH DONORS

Peter Alberti
Larry P. Alford
American Endowment Foundation
AMS
Ann H. Atkinson
Walter and Janis Bachinski
Norman R. Ball and Philippa Campsie
Diana J. Baxter
Carl Benn
Harald and Jean Bohne
Cecily and Robert Bradshaw
Robert C. Brandeis
Jeff and Bernadette Brown
Sharon Brown
Donna M. Burton
Megan E. A. Campbell
Pearce J. Carefoote
John M. Carland
Wendy M. Cecil
Kelvin Chan
Vera Chau
Ricker Choi
Yuen Ling Chung
Tony Comper
Wayne E. Conrad
Myron Cybulsky and Marika Hohol
Janet Dewan
Angela Wei Djao and Anthony Chan
Caroline Seidl Farrell
Joseph Faust
Michael F. Filosa
J. H. Galloway
Chester and Camilla Gryski
S. P. Ha
Barbara J. Heggie
Charles C. Hill
Bonnie Horne
David Zhiyuan Hui
King Hui
David M. and Susan A. Jarzen
Joseph Jones
Howard L. Kaplan
Keith Foundation
William and Hiroko Keith
Thomas Keymer
Kevin Kindellan
Marie Korey
Anita Krumins
Karol Krysik Books
Jeanne A. T. Laframboise
Anne Lancashire
R&M Lang Foundation
Lari Langford
Jon Lanham
Q Li
Tin Yick Lung
Timothy Lynch
Stuart M. MacLeod
Ron Mann
Lorna R. Marsden
Sandra Martin
Duncan McLaren
R. Peter and Virginia McLaughlin
Mark McLean
Carole R. Moore
Marili Moore
Karen Mulhallen
Peter B. Munsche
Deborah A. Nathan
Andrew J. Patenall
Alexander C. Pathy
Carolyn M. Pathy
J. Russell Perkin
Ronald G. Peters
Nicolina Pianosi
Ming Chu Wong Pun
Philip Resnick
Stephen R. Schmidt
Dorene Seltzer
Shaftesbury Inc.
Simon Shen
Roger Silverthorne
Ada Man-Yum So
Maria Subtelny
H. Leonard and Pam Sussman
George Swede
David Tam
Barbara E. Tangney
Timothy W. Taylor
Diana Tsui
Johannes vanderLeest
Gilbert Walker
F. Michael and D. Virginia Walsh
Esther Wan
Frederick Wintrobe
Patricia Xavier
Peter L. Yung

GIFTS-IN-KIND DONORS

Walter and Janis Bachinski
Dorothy Bennie
Daniele Bertrand
Yury Boshyk
Rob Bowman
Robert C. Brandeis
Barry Joseph Morley Callaghan
Paul W. Conway
Adam Crabtree
Joanna Dabrowski
Alexandra Pohran Dawkins
Donna Dunlop
Michael Gervers
Joseph Mark Glazner
Bonny R. Greenberg
Matthew Handscombe
Beatriz Hausner
Roger Herz-Fischler
Bonnie Horne
Bridget Hough
Marie Korey
Shel Krakofsky
Kyo Maclear
Linda E. McKnight
Elizabeth McRae
K. D. Miller
Shahrzad Mojab
George Parker
Andrew B. Pernal
Robert Priest
E. Sewell Russell
Derek Sayer
Beverley Slopen
John D. Stanley and Helmut Reichenbacher
Rosemary Sullivan
Michael Torosian
George and Michelle Walker
C. Peter Watson
Michael E. Welsh
Bruce Whiteman
Rick and Carolyn Wilkins
Mary F. Williamson
Ken Wyman

**Deceased donors are indicated in italics*

Together, we make it possible.

What does it take to keep a library system like ours moving forward?

At the University of Toronto Libraries, progress is never a solo effort. It is a shared achievement made possible by a community that believes in the power of knowledge.

Every new space, every digitized collection, every preserved archive and innovative service begins with collaboration: between librarians and students, donors and staff, faculty and researchers. We build together, guided by a collective belief that access to information transforms lives.

Because of donor generosity, UTL continues to expand its digital collections, enhance preservation efforts, and modernize study spaces that empower the next generation of scholars. Your support fuels the work of librarians who teach students how to find and evaluate information, develop digital tools for discovery, and protect knowledge for the future.

As we reflect on this year's accomplishments, one message stands out: we cannot do it alone. Every achievement, from new partnerships and technologies to the moments of discovery that happen quietly in our libraries every day, is made possible by those who believe in our mission.

To all our supporters, partners, and friends: thank you for making this work possible. Together, we are building libraries that not only preserve knowledge, but also shape the future of how this knowledge is discovered and shared.

If you have any questions or would like to learn more about supporting the University of Toronto Libraries, please contact Mimosa Kabir Ketley at **mimosa.kabir@utoronto.ca**.

Thank you for your generosity, partnership, and belief in the power of libraries.